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WIN A Columbia TEN-SPEED FORMULA 10™ RACER!
DETAILS INSIDE
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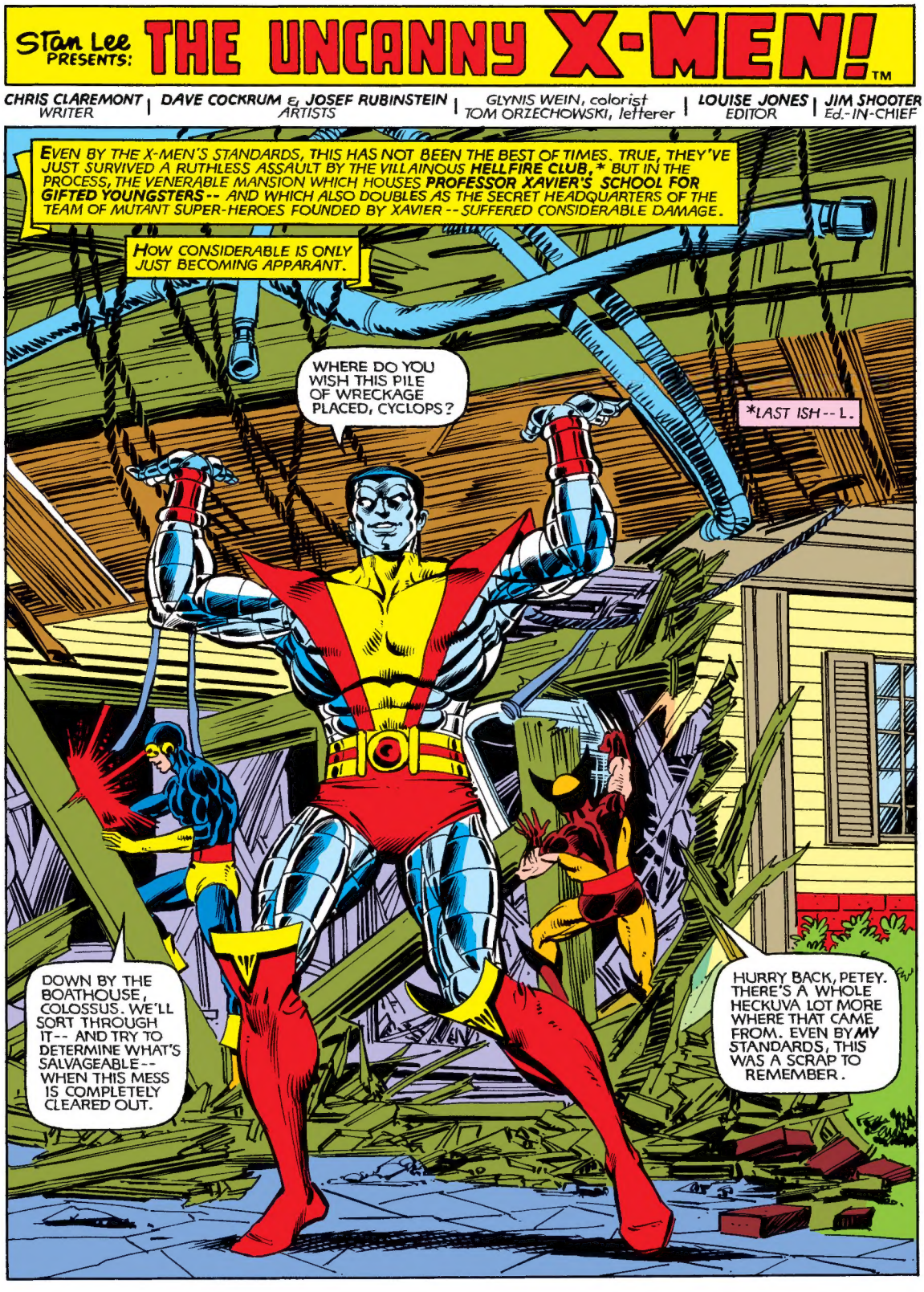
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN™
HOT BUTTERED POPCORN
Cola
AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!
COCKRUM / ROBINSTEIN



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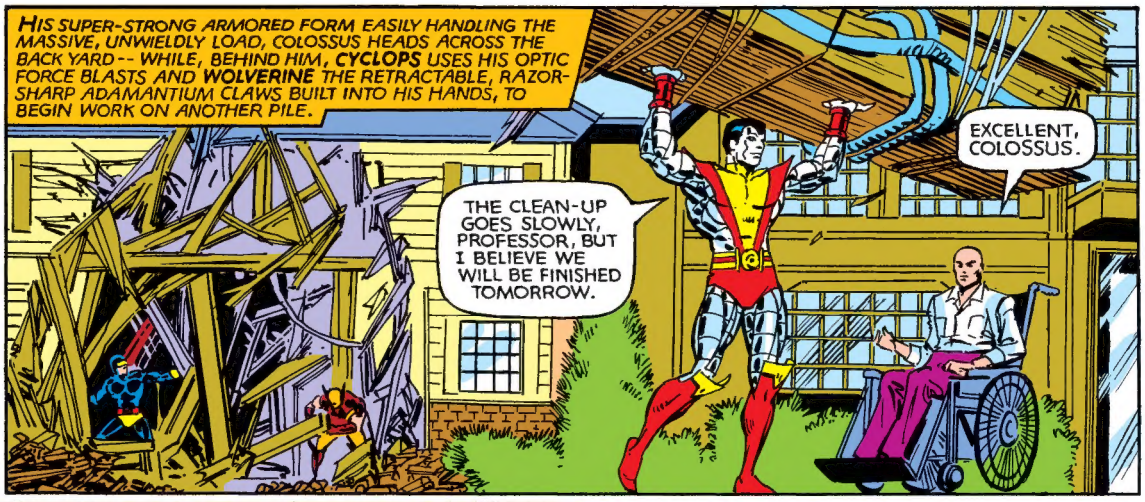
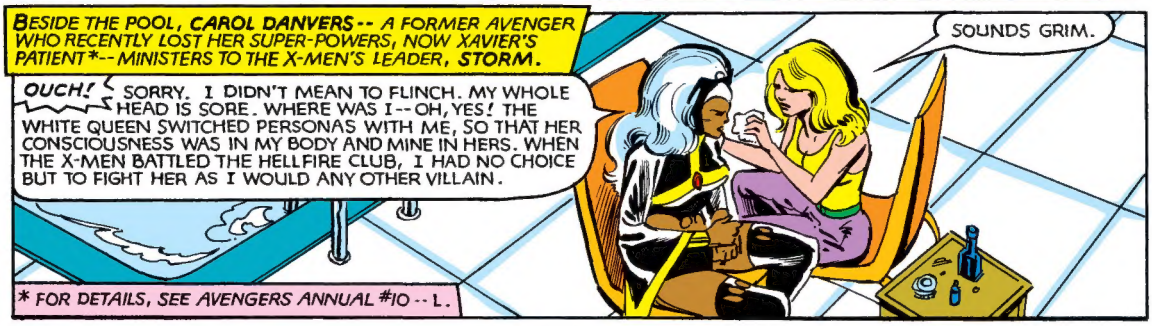
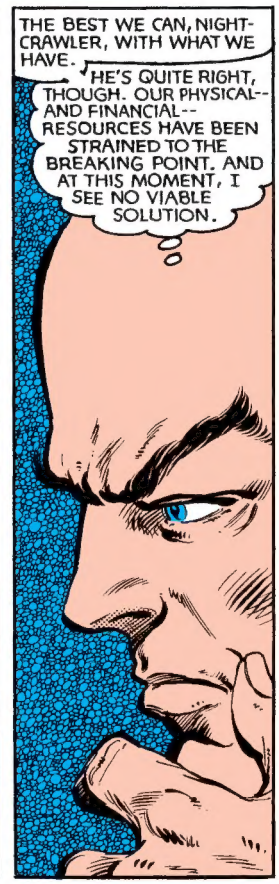

HIS SUPER-STRONG ARMORED FORM EASILY HANDLING THE MASSIVE, UNWIELDLY LOAD, COLOSSUS HEADS ACROSS THE BACK YARD -- WHILE, BEHIND HIM, CYCLOPS USES HIS OPTIC FORCE BLASTS AND WOLVERINE THE RETRACTABLE, RAZOR-SHARP ADAMANTIUM CLAWS BUILT INTO HIS HANDS, TO BEGIN WORK ON ANOTHER PILE.
THE CLEAN-UP GOES SLOWLY, PROFESSOR, BUT I BELIEVE WE WILL BE FINISHED TOMORROW.
EXCELLENT, COLOSSUS.

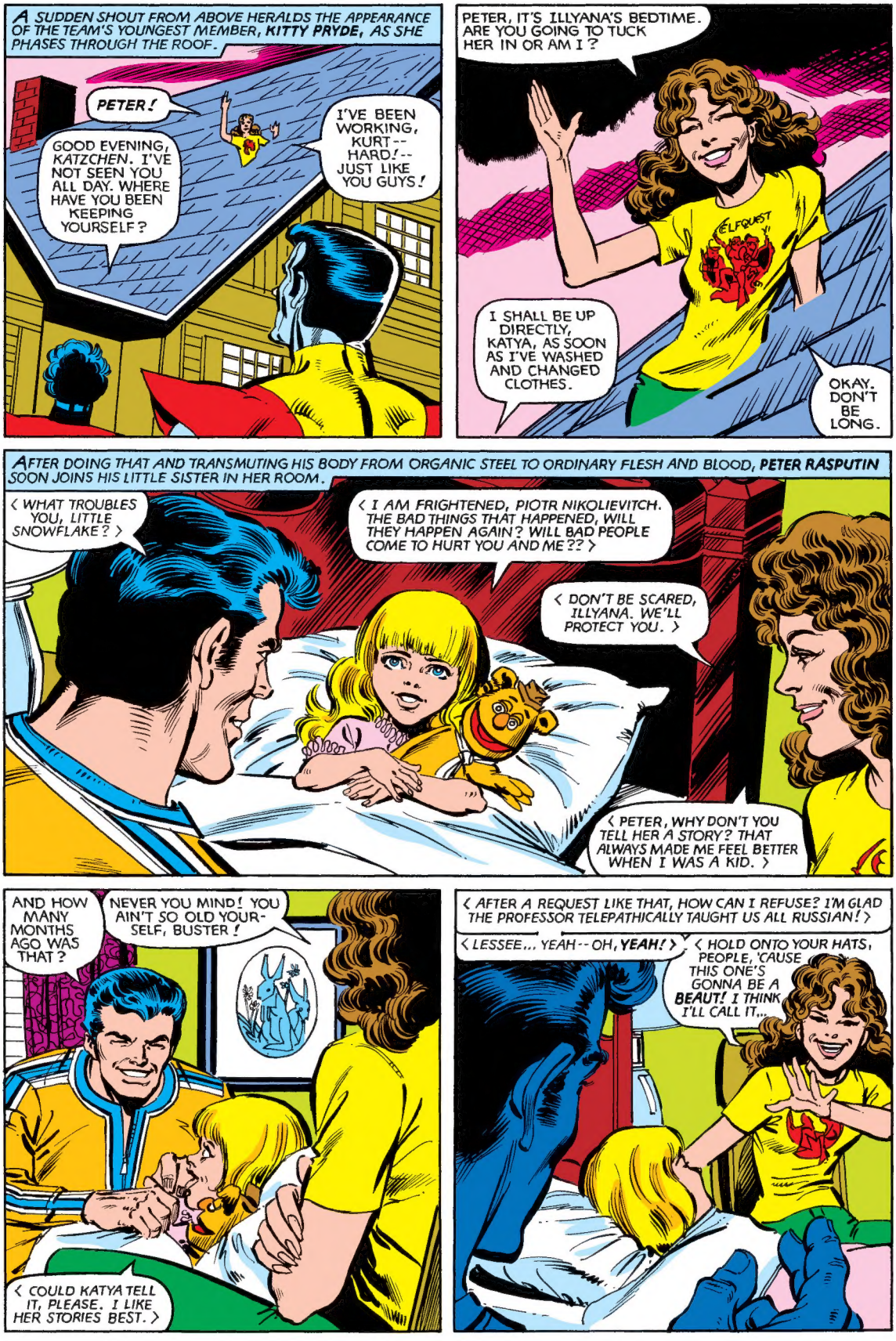

BESIDE THE POOL, CAROL DANVERS -- A FORMER AVENGER WHO RECENTLY LOST HER SUPER-POWERS, NOW XAVIER'S PATIENT*--MINISTERS TO THE X-MEN'S LEADER, STORM.
OUCH! SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO FLINCH. MY WHOLE HEAD IS SORE. WHERE WAS I -- OH, YES! THE WHITE QUEEN SWITCHED PERSONAS WITH ME, SO THAT HER CONSCIOUSNESS WAS IN MY BODY AND MINE IN HERS. WHEN THE X-MEN BATTLED THE HELLFIRE CLUB, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT HER AS I WOULD ANY OTHER VILLAIN.
SOUNDS GRIM.
* FOR DETAILS, SEE AVENGERS ANNUAL #10 -- L.

IT WAS. THE HELLFIRE CLUB WAS ROUTED -- BUT MY BODY PAID THE PRICE. I ACHE, WHILE THE WHITE QUEEN ESCAPED VIRTUALLY UNSCATHED.
SOMEHOW, IT DOESN'T SEEM QUITE FAIR.

PROFESSOR, I'VE FINISHED MY INSPECTION TOUR. I THOUGHT I'D TELEPORT AND GIVE YOU THE NEWS IN PERSON RATHER THAN OVER THE INTERCOM OR BY HAVING YOU READ MY MIND.
THINGS ARE AS BAD AS WE FEARED.

THE DANGER ROOM, THE PRIME COMPUTER AND ONE WING OF THE HOUSE ARE A TOTAL LOSS. THE HANGAR COMPLEX AND OUR "BLACKBIRD" AIRCRAFT SUFFERED MINIMAL DAMAGE.
PROFESSOR, WE CANNOT EFFECT REPAIRS BY OURSELVES. WE LACK THE TOOLS, THE RAW MATERIALS, THE EXPERTISE. WHAT ARE WE TO DO?


THE BEST WE CAN, NIGHTCRAWLER, WITH WHAT WE HAVE.
HE'S QUITE RIGHT, THOUGH. OUR PHYSICAL -- AND FINANCIAL -- RESOURCES HAVE BEEN STRAINED TO THE BREAKING POINT. AND AT THIS MOMENT, I SEE NO VIABLE SOLUTION.


A SUDDEN SHOUT FROM ABOVE HERALDS THE APPEARANCE OF THE TEAM'S YOUNGEST MEMBER, KITTY PRYDE, AS SHE PHASES THROUGH THE ROOF.
PETER!
GOOD EVENING, KATZCHEN. I'VE NOT SEEN YOU ALL DAY. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN KEEPING YOURSELF?
I'VE BEEN WORKING, KURT-- HARD!-- JUST LIKE YOU GUYS!
PETER, IT'S ILLYANA'S BEDTIME. ARE YOU GOING TO TUCK HER IN OR AM I?
I SHALL BE UP DIRECTLY, KATYA, AS SOON AS I'VE WASHED AND CHANGED CLOTHES.
OKAY. DON'T BE LONG.
AFTER DOING THAT AND TRANSMUTING HIS BODY FROM ORGANIC STEEL TO ORDINARY FLESH AND BLOOD, PETER RASPUTIN SOON JOINS HIS LITTLE SISTER IN HER ROOM.
< WHAT TROUBLES YOU, LITTLE SNOWFLAKE? >
< I AM FRIGHTENED, PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH. THE BAD THINGS THAT HAPPENED, WILL THEY HAPPEN AGAIN? WILL BAD PEOPLE COME TO HURT YOU AND ME?? >
< DON'T BE SCARED, ILLYANA. WE'LL PROTECT YOU. >
< PETER, WHY DON'T YOU TELL HER A STORY? THAT ALWAYS MADE ME FEEL BETTER WHEN I WAS A KID. >
AND HOW MANY MONTHS AGO WAS THAT?
NEVER YOU MIND! YOU AIN'T SO OLD YOURSELF, BUSTER!
< COULD KATYA TELL IT, PLEASE. I LIKE HER STORIES BEST. >
< AFTER A REQUEST LIKE THAT, HOW CAN I REFUSE? I'M GLAD THE PROFESSOR TELEPATHICALLY TAUGHT US ALL RUSSIAN! >
< LESSEE... YEAH-- OH, YEAH! >
< HOLD ONTO YOUR HATS, PEOPLE, 'CAUSE THIS ONE'S GONNA BE A BEAUT! I THINK I'LL CALL IT...

KITTY'S FAIRY TALE

THE PLAYERS:

KITTY PRYDE as PIRATE KITTY

KURT WAGNER (NIGHTCRAWLER) as (under protest) a BAMF

PETER RASPUTIN as COLOSSUS, her true love

LOGAN (WOLVERINE) as the FIEND WITH NO NAME

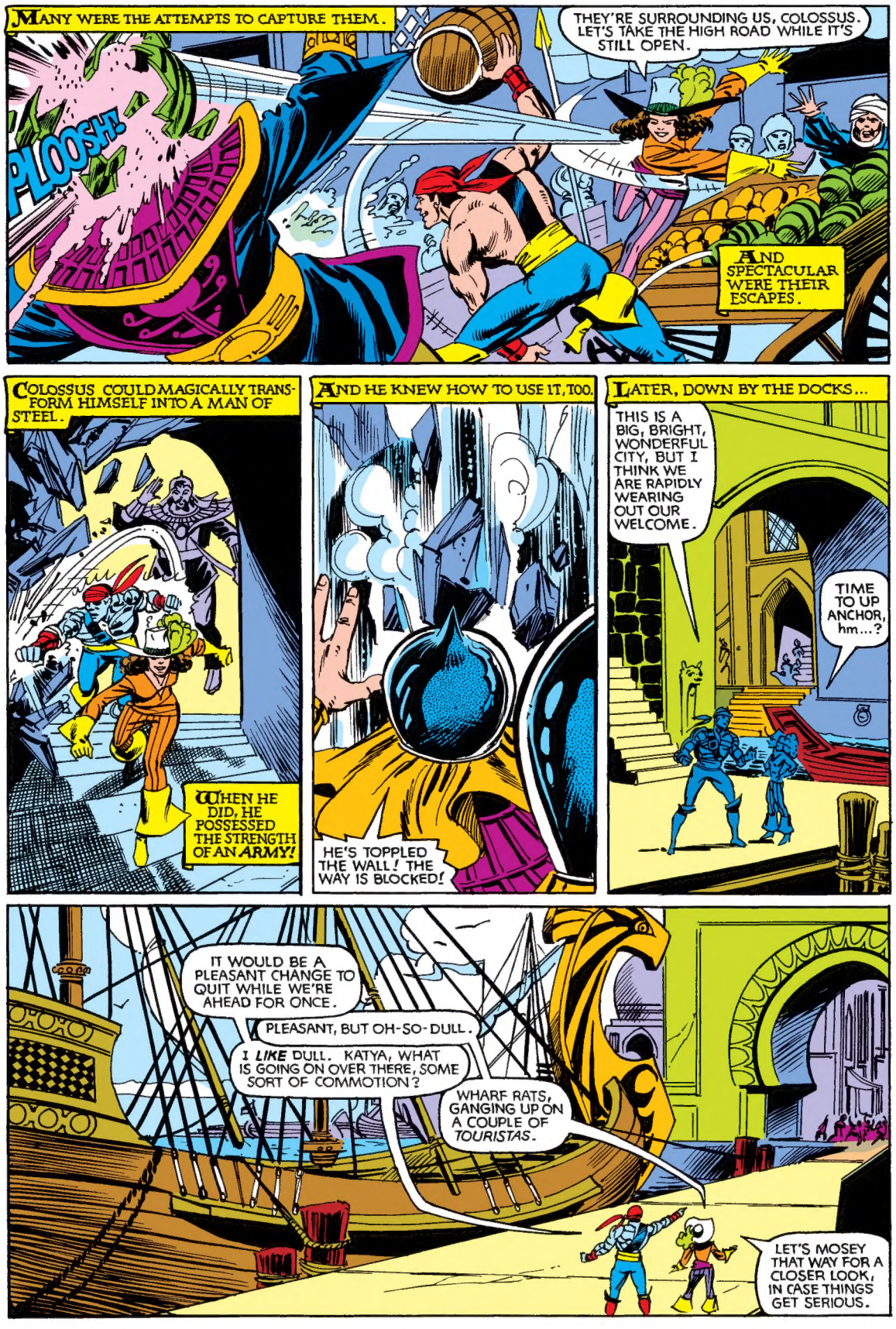
SCOTT SUMMERS as the NOBLE PRINCE

The SR-71 "BLACKBIRD" as LOCKHEED THE DRAGON

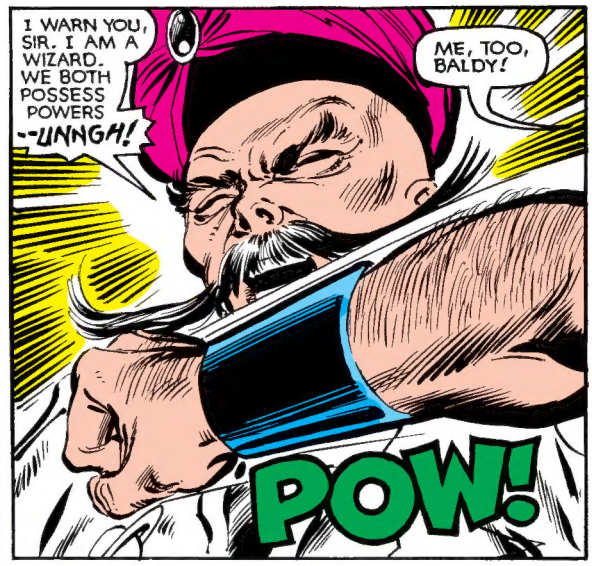
CHARLES XAVIER as the WIZARD

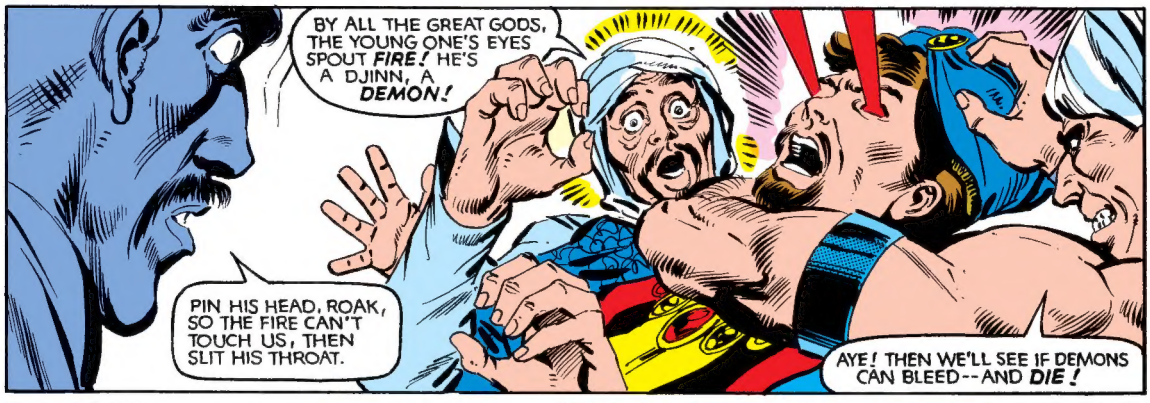
JEAN GREY (PHŒNIX) as the ENCHANTED PRINCESS

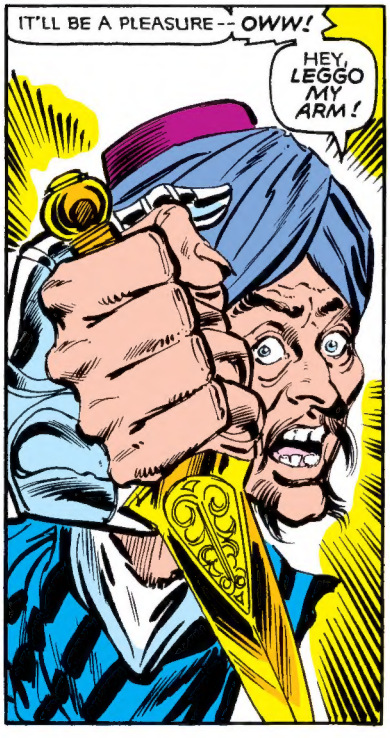
ORORO (STORM) as the GENIE


MANY WERE THE ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THEM.
PLOOSH!
THEY'RE SURROUNDING US, COLOSSUS. LET'S TAKE THE HIGH ROAD WHILE IT'S STILL OPEN.
AND SPECTACULAR WERE THEIR ESCAPES.
COLOSSUS COULD MAGICALLY TRANSFORM HIMSELF INTO A MAN OF STEEL.
WHEN HE DID, HE POSSESSED THE STRENGTH OF AN ARMY!
AND HE KNEW HOW TO USE IT, TOO.
HE'S TOPPLED THE WALL! THE WAY IS BLOCKED!
LATER, DOWN BY THE DOCKS...
THIS IS A BIG, BRIGHT, WONDERFUL CITY, BUT I THINK WE ARE RAPIDLY WEARING OUT OUR WELCOME.
TIME TO UP ANCHOR, hm...?
IT WOULD BE A PLEASANT CHANGE TO QUIT WHILE WE'RE AHEAD FOR ONCE.
PLEASANT, BUT OH-SO-DULL.
I LIKE DULL. KATYA, WHAT IS GOING ON OVER THERE, SOME SORT OF COMMOTION?
WHARF RATS, GANGING UP ON A COUPLE OF TOURISTAS.
LET'S MOSEY THAT WAY FOR A CLOSER LOOK, IN CASE THINGS GET SERIOUS.

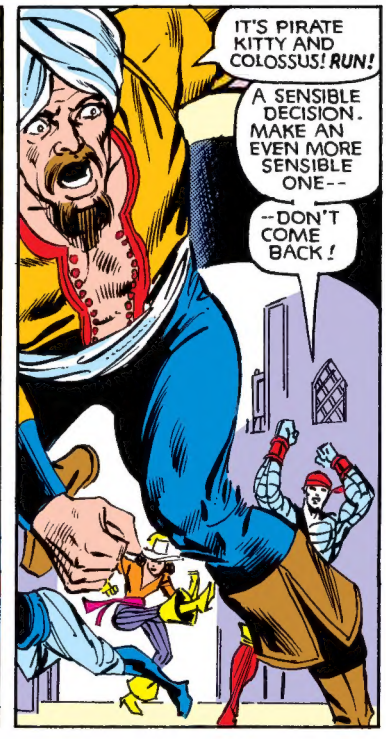
LOST YER WAY, GENTLEMEN? THAT'S TOO BAD--FER YOU!
LET US PASS, PLEASE. WE ARE SIMPLE TRAVELLERS. WE COME IN PEACE.
WELL, LA-DE-DAH, LISTEN TO THE YOUNGSTER TALK. YE'LL DEPART IN PIECES, YA SCUT, LESS'N YA HAND OVER YER GOLD.

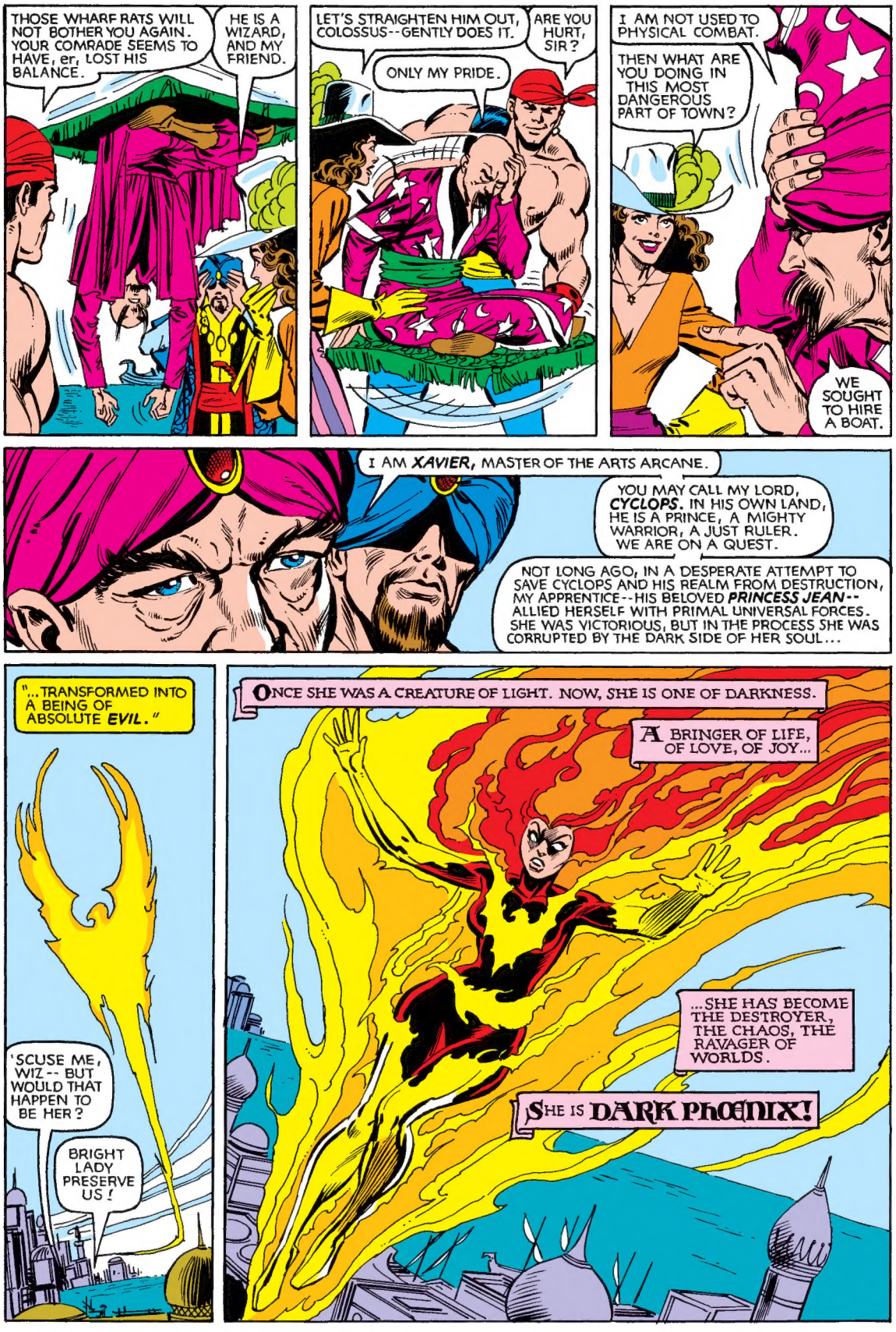

I WARN YOU, SIR. I AM A WIZARD. WE BOTH POSSESS POWERS --UNNGH!
ME, TOO, BALDY!
POW!

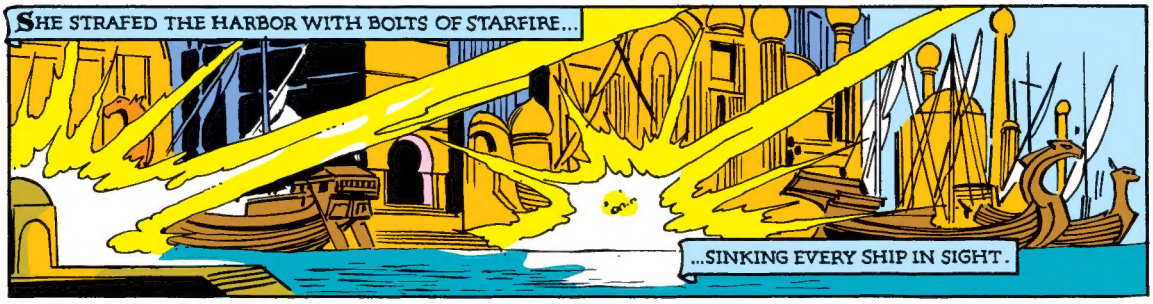

BY ALL THE GREAT GODS, THE YOUNG ONE'S EYES SPOUT FIRE! HE'S A DJINN, A DEMON!
PIN HIS HEAD, ROAK, SO THE FIRE CAN'T TOUCH US, THEN SLIT HIS THROAT.
AYE! THEN WE'LL SEE IF DEMONS CAN BLEED--AND DIE!


IT'LL BE A PLEASURE--OWW!
HEY, LEGGO MY ARM!

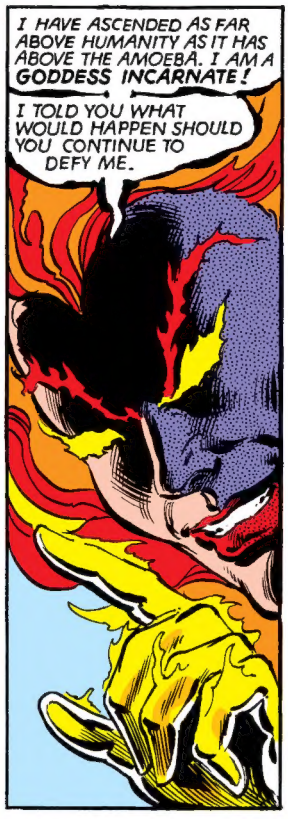
YYYIIII!
IF YOU INSIST, TOVARISCH. HAPPY LANDINGS!

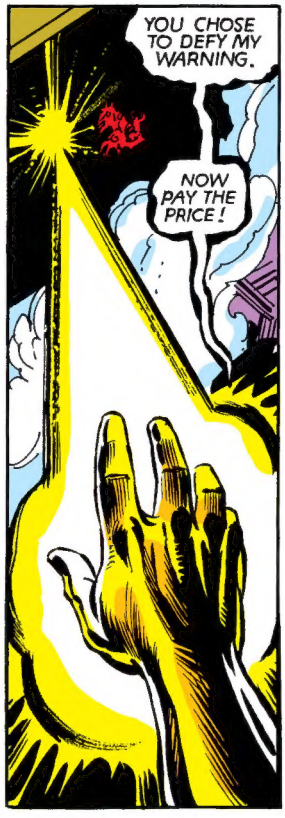

IT'S PIRATE KITTY AND COLOSSUS! RUN!
A SENSIBLE DECISION. MAKE AN EVEN MORE SENSIBLE ONE--
--DON'T COME BACK!


THOSE WHARF RATS WILL NOT BOTHER YOU AGAIN. YOUR COMRADE SEEMS TO HAVE, er, LOST HIS BALANCE.
HE IS A WIZARD, AND MY FRIEND.
LET'S STRAIGHTEN HIM OUT, COLOSSUS--GENTLY DOES IT.
ARE YOU HURT, SIR?
ONLY MY PRIDE.
I AM NOT USED TO PHYSICAL COMBAT.
THEN WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS MOST DANGEROUS PART OF TOWN?
WE SOUGHT TO HIRE A BOAT.
I AM XAVIER, MASTER OF THE ARTS ARCANE.
YOU MAY CALL MY LORD, CYCLOPS. IN HIS OWN LAND, HE IS A PRINCE, A MIGHTY WARRIOR, A JUST RULER. WE ARE ON A QUEST.
NOT LONG AGO, IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO SAVE CYCLOPS AND HIS REALM FROM DESTRUCTION, MY APPRENTICE--HIS BELOVED PRINCESS JEAN--ALLIED HERSELF WITH PRIMAL UNIVERSAL FORCES. SHE WAS VICTORIOUS, BUT IN THE PROCESS SHE WAS CORRUPTED BY THE DARK SIDE OF HER SOUL...
"...TRANSFORMED INTO A BEING OF ABSOLUTE EVIL."
'SCUSE ME, WIZ-- BUT WOULD THAT HAPPEN TO BE HER?
BRIGHT LADY PRESERVE US!
ONCE SHE WAS A CREATURE OF LIGHT. NOW, SHE IS ONE OF DARKNESS.
A BRINGER OF LIFE, OF LOVE, OF JOY...
...SHE HAS BECOME THE DESTROYER, THE CHAOS, THE RAVAGER OF WORLDS.
SHE IS DARK PHOENIX!

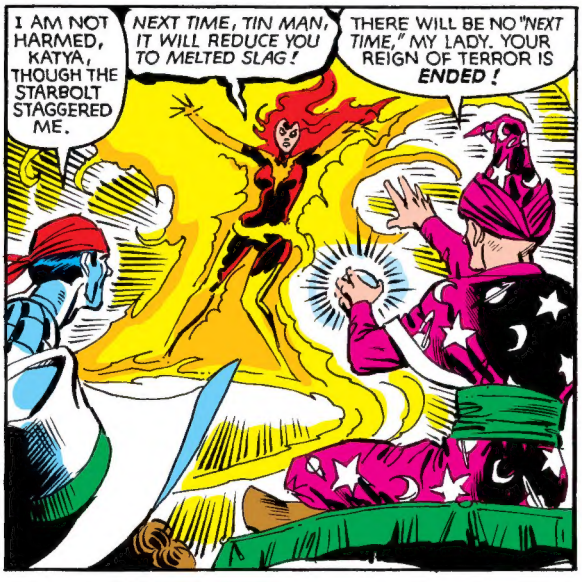

SHE STRAFED THE HARBOR WITH BOLTS OF STARFIRE...
...SINKING EVERY SHIP IN SIGHT.

YOUR QUEST IS OVER, OLD MAN, ALMOST BEFORE IT'S TRULY BEGUN.
I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.
KNOW ANY GOOD DEFENSIVE SPELLS, WIZ?

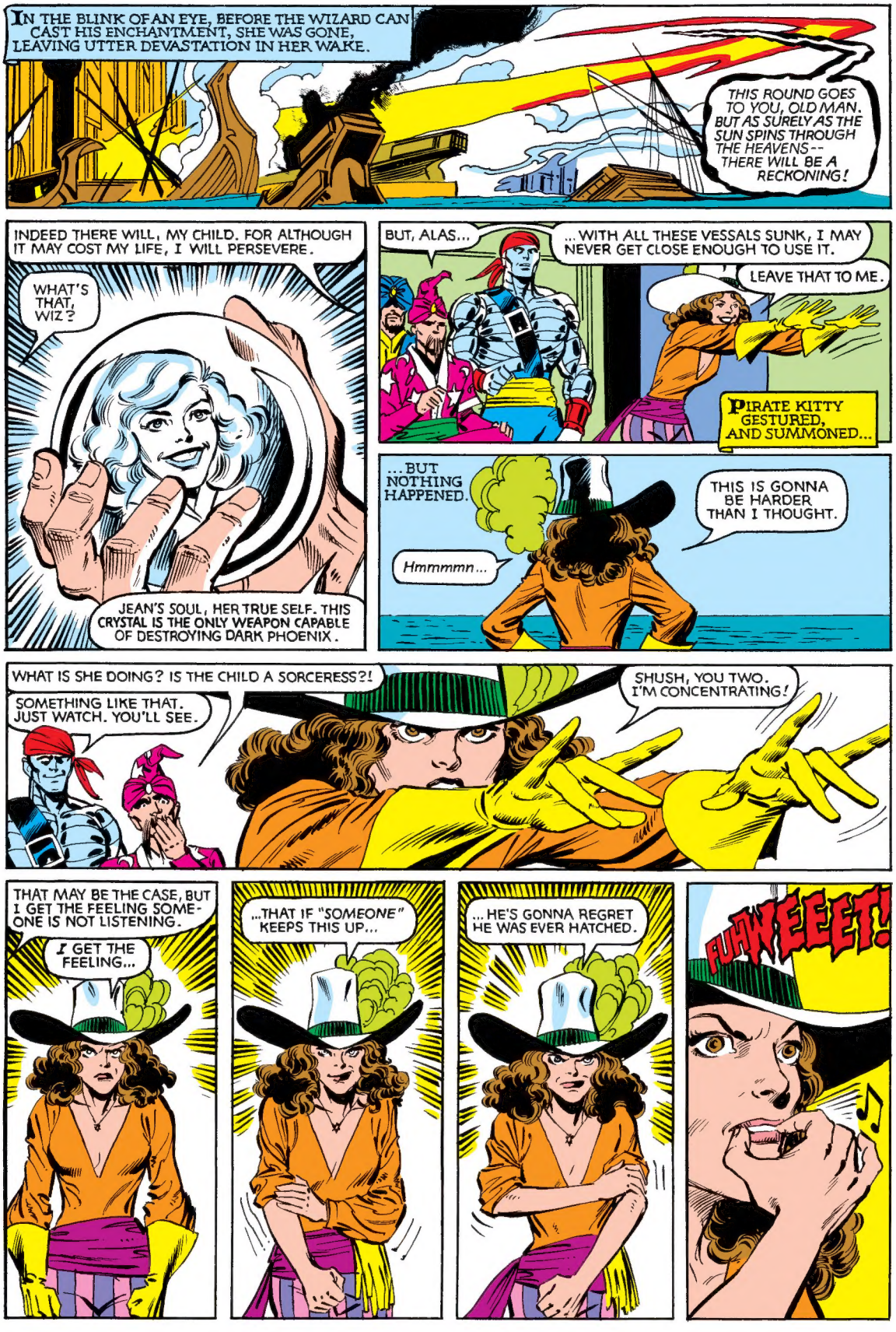

I HAVE ASCENDED AS FAR ABOVE HUMANITY AS IT HAS ABOVE THE AMOEBA. I AM A GODDESS INCARNATE!
I TOLD YOU WHAT WOULD HAPPEN SHOULD YOU CONTINUE TO DEFY ME.

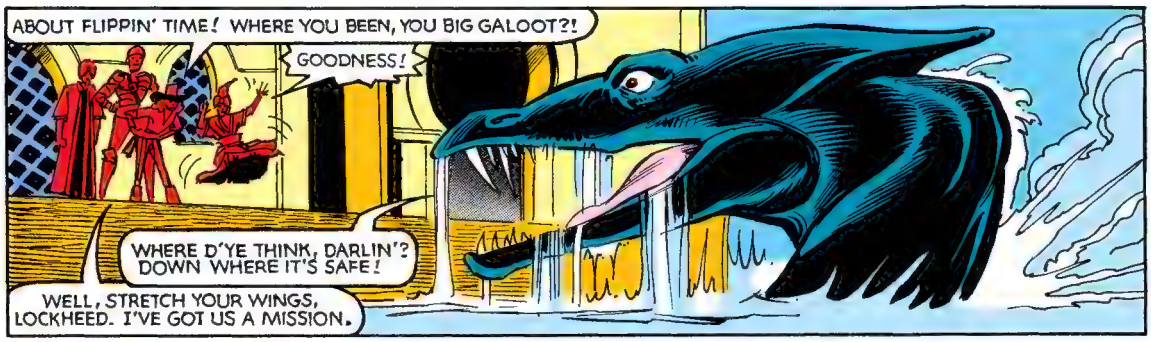

YOU CHOSE TO DEFY MY WARNING.
NOW PAY THE PRICE!

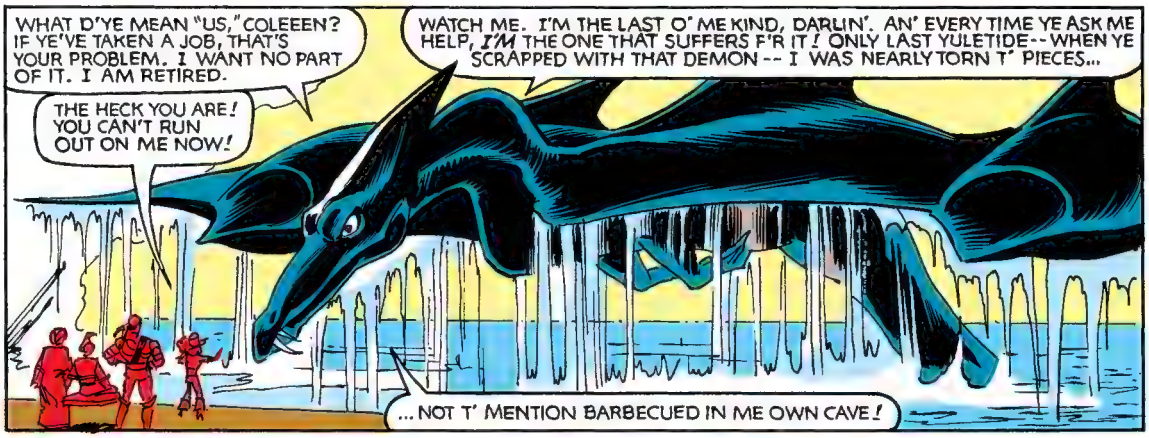
GET DOWN, PRINCE CYCLOPS! I WILL PROTECT--
AHHRR!
COLOSSUS!


I AM NOT HARMED, KATYA, THOUGH THE STARBOLT STAGGERED ME.
NEXT TIME, TIN MAN, IT WILL REDUCE YOU TO MELTED SLAG!
THERE WILL BE NO "NEXT TIME," MY LADY. YOUR REIGN OF TERROR IS ENDED!

NO!


IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, BEFORE THE WIZARD CAN CAST HIS ENCHANTMENT, SHE WAS GONE, LEAVING UTTER DEVASTATION IN HER WAKE.
THIS ROUND GOES TO YOU, OLD MAN. BUT AS SURELY AS THE SUN SPINS THROUGH THE HEAVENS -- THERE WILL BE A RECKONING!
INDEED THERE WILL, MY CHILD. FOR ALTHOUGH IT MAY COST MY LIFE, I WILL PERSEVERE.
WHAT'S THAT, WIZ?
JEAN'S SOUL, HER TRUE SELF. THIS CRYSTAL IS THE ONLY WEAPON CAPABLE OF DESTROYING DARK PHOENIX.
BUT, ALAS...
...WITH ALL THESE VESSALS SUNK, I MAY NEVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO USE IT.
LEAVE THAT TO ME.
PIRATE KITTY GESTURED, AND SUMMONED...
...BUT NOTHING HAPPENED.
THIS IS GONNA BE HARDER THAN I THOUGHT.
Hmmmmn...
WHAT IS SHE DOING? IS THE CHILD A SORCERESS?!
SOMETHING LIKE THAT. JUST WATCH. YOU'LL SEE.
SHUSH, YOU TWO. I'M CONCENTRATING!
THAT MAY BE THE CASE, BUT I GET THE FEELING SOMEONE IS NOT LISTENING.
I GET THE FEELING...
...THAT IF "SOMEONE" KEEPS THIS UP...
...HE'S GONNA REGRET HE WAS EVER HATCHED.
FUHWEEET!

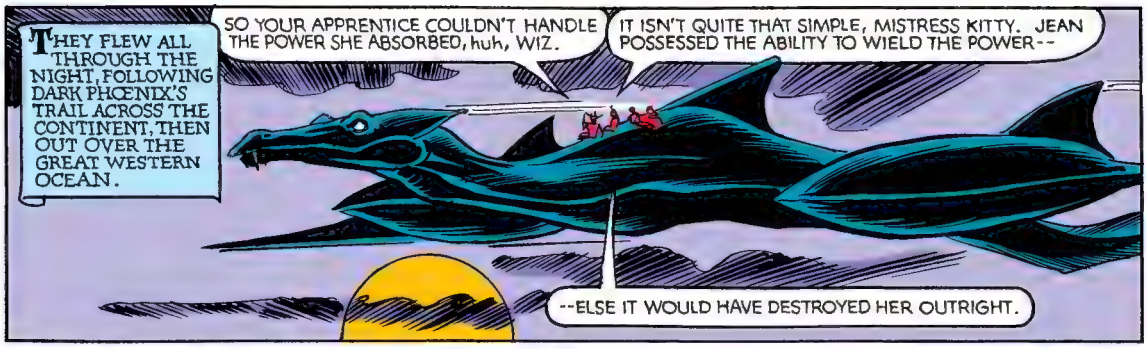

ABOUT FLIPPIN' TIME! WHERE YOU BEEN, YOU BIG GALOOT?!
GOODNESS!
WHERE D'YE THINK, DARLIN'? DOWN WHERE IT'S SAFE!
WELL, STRETCH YOUR WINGS, LOCKHEED. I'VE GOT US A MISSION.


WHAT D'YE MEAN "US," COLEEEN? IF YE'VE TAKEN A JOB, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM. I WANT NO PART OF IT. I AM RETIRED.
THE HECK YOU ARE! YOU CAN'T RUN OUT ON ME NOW!
WATCH ME. I'M THE LAST O' ME KIND, DARLIN'. AN' EVERY TIME YE ASK ME HELP, I'M THE ONE THAT SUFFERS F'R IT! ONLY LAST YULETIDE -- WHEN YE SCRAPPED WITH THAT DEMON -- I WAS NEARLY TORN T' PIECES...
... NOT T' MENTION BARBECUED IN ME OWN CAVE!

HE WAS TRYING TO KILL ME!
THAT'S NO EXCUSE.
LISTEN, LUMMOX, IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA EMBARRASS ME IN FRONT OF COLOSSUS' AN' EVERYBODY--!
THE DISCUSSION WAS FIERCE AND TO THE POINT, THE OUTCOME NEVER TRULY IN DOUBT...

... AS PIRATE KITTY'S ELOQUENCE -- AND WELL-REASONED ARGUMENTS -- FINALLY SWAYED THE GIANT DRAGON.
WHAT'S UP, ELF?
QUIET, WOLVERINE. DON'T LET KITTY HEAR YOU.
WHY?

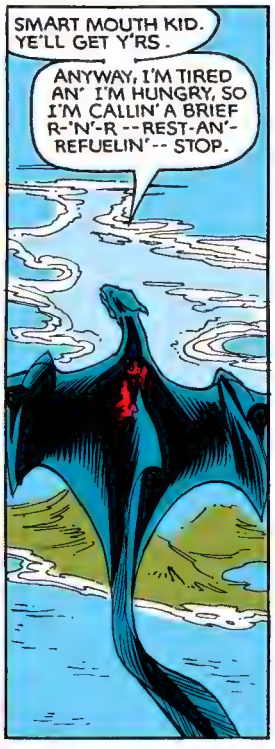
WHISPER, BLAST IT! SHE'S TELLING ILLYANA A BEDTIME STORY, AND IT IS MAGNIFICENT!
LISTEN, AND JUDGE FOR YOURSELF.
IT BETTER BE GOOD, FUZZY, 'CAUSE I FEEL PRETTY SILLY STANDIN' HERE -- AND I DON'T LIKE TO FEEL SILLY.

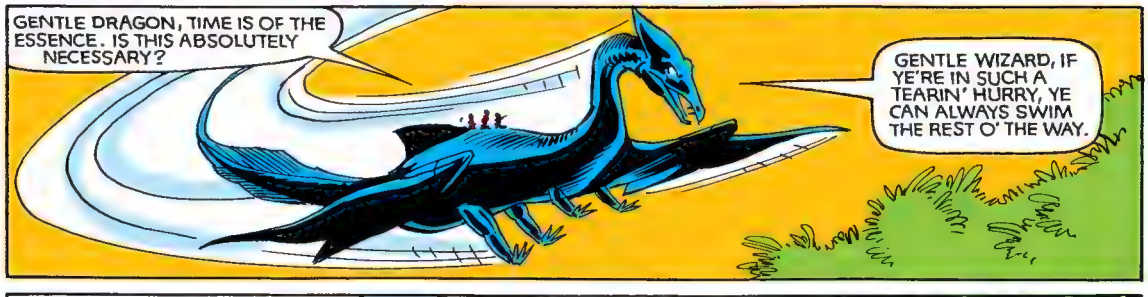

THEY FLEW ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT, FOLLOWING DARK PHŒNIX'S TRAIL ACROSS THE CONTINENT, THEN OUT OVER THE GREAT WESTERN OCEAN.
SO YOUR APPRENTICE COULDN'T HANDLE THE POWER SHE ABSORBED, huh, WIZ.
IT ISN'T QUITE THAT SIMPLE, MISTRESS KITTY. JEAN POSSESSED THE ABILITY TO WIELD THE POWER--
--ELSE IT WOULD HAVE DESTROYED HER OUTRIGHT.

BUT TO ALL THINGS-- ALL CREATURES-- ARE THEIR PROPER SEASONS. THE PHOENIX-FORCE IS MEANT TO BE USED BY AN... ADULT. ON THAT COSMIC SCALE, HOMO SAPIENS AS A RACE IS NO MORE THAN AN INFANT.
AS WELL, THERE EXISTS WITHIN EVERYONE A DARK SIDE, TO BALANCE AND GIVE MEANING TO THE LIGHT.
BECAUSE JEAN LACKED THE "COSMIC AWARENESS", THE MATURITY OF SELF...

...TO PROPERLY CONTAIN THE PHOENIX-FORCE, IT DISRUPTED THE BALANCE WITHIN HER SOUL, AND THE DARK SIDE GAINED ASCENDANCY.
THAT ESSENTIAL BALANCE MUST BE RESTORED. I ONLY PRAY THAT WE ARE NOT ALREADY TOO LATE, THAT HER TRANSFORMATION IS NOT IRREVERSIBLE.

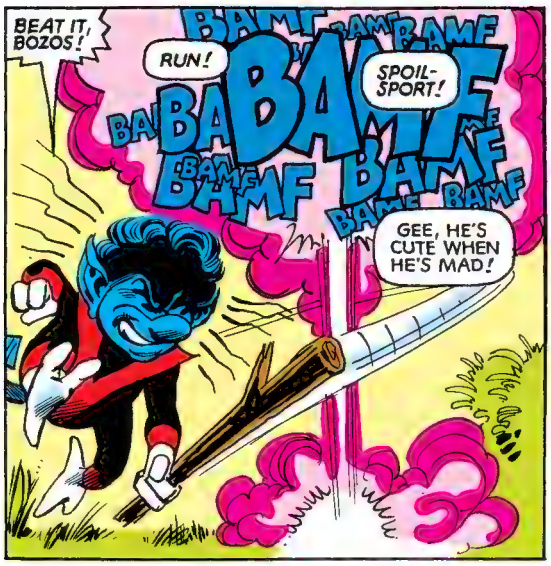
I HATE LIKE TH' DICKENS TO INTERRUPT Y'R COLLOQUY...
I'LL BET YOU DO.


SMART MOUTH KID. YE'LL GET Y'RS.
ANYWAY, I'M TIRED AN' I'M HUNGRY, SO I'M CALLIN' A BRIEF R-'N'-R --REST-AN'-REFUELIN'-- STOP.

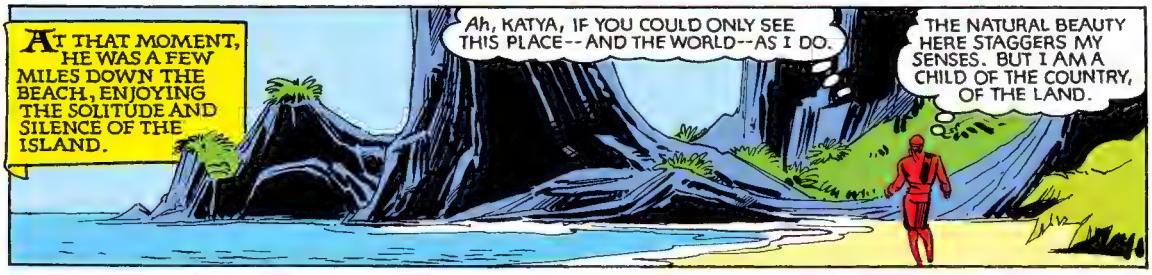

GENTLE DRAGON, TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. IS THIS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY?
GENTLE WIZARD, IF YE'RE IN SUCH A TEARIN' HURRY, YE CAN ALWAYS SWIM THE REST O' THE WAY.

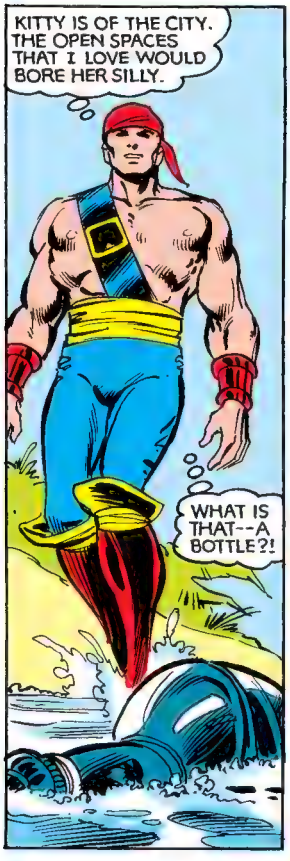
LOCKHEED'S GONE HUNTING, KITTY, AND I'M GOING EXPLORING. WANT TO COME?
THANKS, COLOSSUS, BUT I FEEL PRETTY BUSHED. I'M GONNA CATCH SOME "Z'S".
BIGTHINGS!
HUSH, PIN!! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!
THEY'RE LEAVING THE GIRL ALONE! GREAT!!

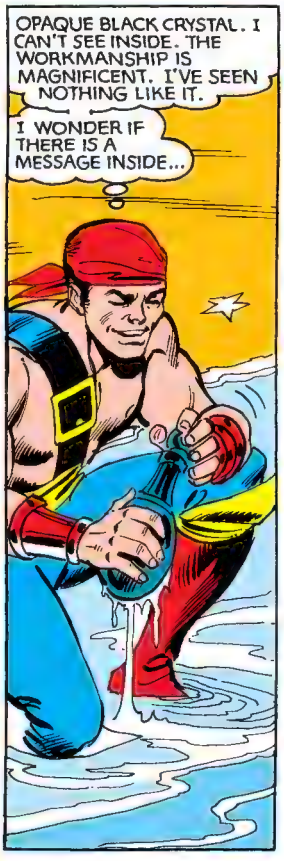
MINUTES LATER, KITTY WAS ENJOYING A NIFTY--AND VERY NAUGHTY-- DREAM WHEN SOMETHING PLOPPED OUT OF NOWHERE ONTO HER STOMACH.
Hmnh...? WHUZZAT...?
HUH!?!
I'M NO GIRL. I'M A PIRATE. AND I'M DREAMING. THIS IS TOO RIDICULOUS TO BE REAL.
Humph! PRETTY SMART TALK--
--FROM A LADY WHO RIDES A DRAGON!
BAMF
HEY!!
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU?!?
I'M A BAMF! AND YOU'RE A GIRL!
WANT TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER, LEIBCHEN?
Ach, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT, OR STRANGLE KITTY.
GRIN AN' BEAR IT, BUB. I THINK SHE PEGGED YOU JUST RIGHT.
'RORO, CAROL, TAKE A PEW AN' LISTEN-UP. KITTY'S SPINNIN' THE SWEETEST YARN SINCE "CASABLANCA."
PHEW!
WHAT A STINK! WHERE'D YOU GO, FELLA? AND WHY'D YOU COME BACK?
OH, WE CAN TELEPORT. IT'S EASY, AND FUN! I CAME BACK BECAUSE I'M IN LOVE.
WITH YOU!
Sigh.
YIKES!!
GIRL!
WHERE?!
MINE!
I SAW HER FIRST!
TOUGH!


BEAT IT, BOZOS!
RUN!
SPOIL-SPORT!
BAMF
GEE, HE'S CUTE WHEN HE'S MAD!

THANK YOU, BAMF, FOR SAVING ME FROM YOUR BASIC FATE WORSE THAN DEATH.
ANYTIME, GORGEOUS. DO I GET A KISS AS A REWARD?
Ahem!
COLOSSUS, WHERE ARE YOU WHEN I REALLY NEED YOU???

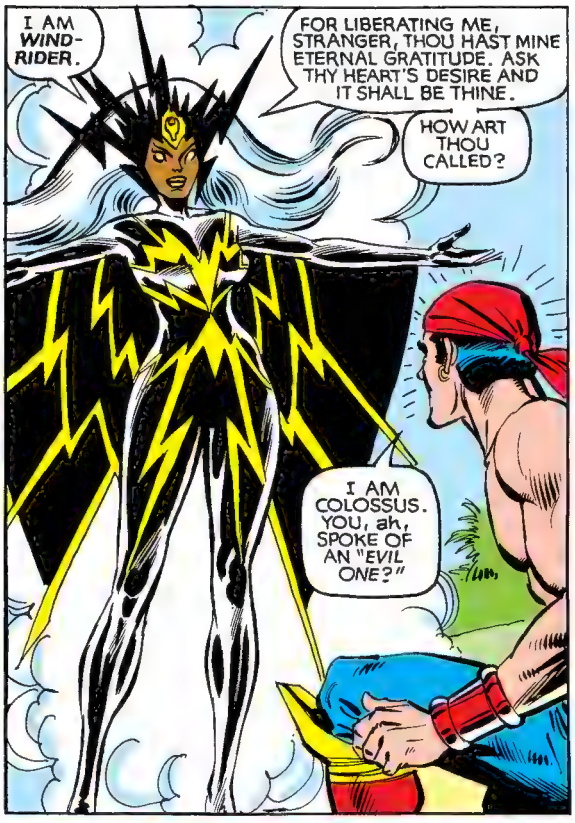

AT THAT MOMENT, HE WAS A FEW MILES DOWN THE BEACH, ENJOYING THE SOLITUDE AND SILENCE OF THE ISLAND.
Ah, KATYA, IF YOU COULD ONLY SEE THIS PLACE--AND THE WORLD--AS I DO.
THE NATURAL BEAUTY HERE STAGGERS MY SENSES. BUT I AM A CHILD OF THE COUNTRY, OF THE LAND.

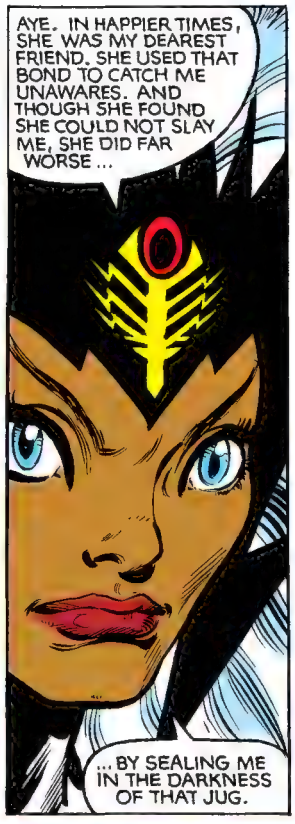

KITTY IS OF THE CITY. THE OPEN SPACES THAT I LOVE WOULD BORE HER SILLY.
WHAT IS THAT--A BOTTLE?!

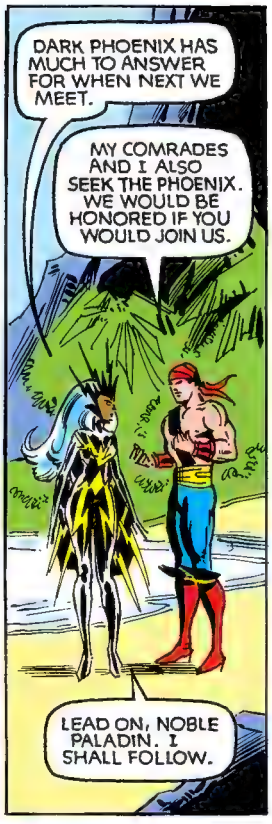

OPAQUE BLACK CRYSTAL. I CAN'T SEE INSIDE. THE WORKMANSHIP IS MAGNIFICENT. I'VE SEEN NOTHING LIKE IT.
I WONDER IF THERE IS A MESSAGE INSIDE...

...OR BETTER YET--HAH--A...
...GENIE...
BY THE WHITE WOLF!

FREE!!
GODS OF THE EARTH AND AIR--
--THY DAUGHTER WHOM THE EVIL ONE IMPRISONED IS HELD NO LONGER!

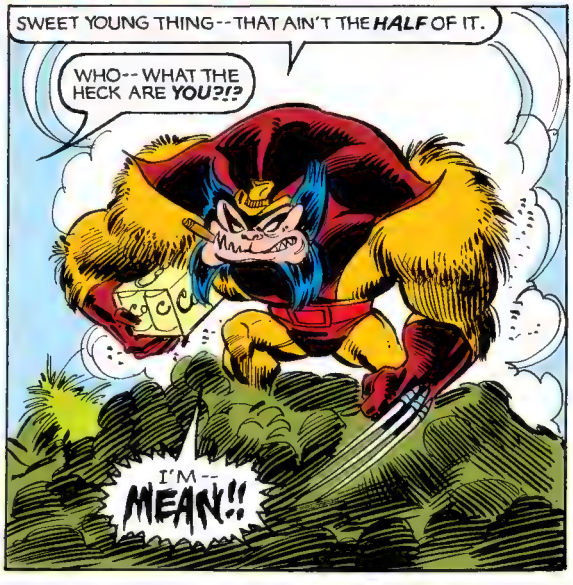

I AM WIND-RIDER.
FOR LIBERATING ME, STRANGER, THOU HAST MINE ETERNAL GRATITUDE. ASK THY HEART'S DESIRE AND IT SHALL BE THINE.
HOW ART THOU CALLED?
I AM COLOSSUS. YOU, ah, SPOKE OF AN "EVIL ONE?"

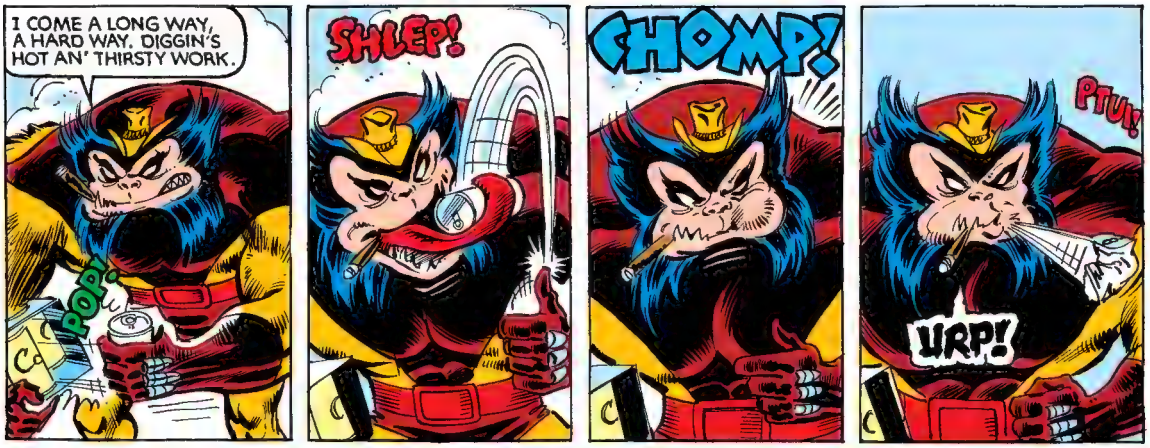

AYE. IN HAPPIER TIMES, SHE WAS MY DEAREST FRIEND. SHE USED THAT BOND TO CATCH ME UNAWARES. AND THOUGH SHE FOUND SHE COULD NOT SLAY ME, SHE DID FAR WORSE ...
... BY SEALING ME IN THE DARKNESS OF THAT JUG.


DARK PHOENIX HAS MUCH TO ANSWER FOR WHEN NEXT WE MEET.
MY COMRADES AND I ALSO SEEK THE PHOENIX. WE WOULD BE HONORED IF YOU WOULD JOIN US.
LEAD ON, NOBLE PALADIN. I SHALL FOLLOW.

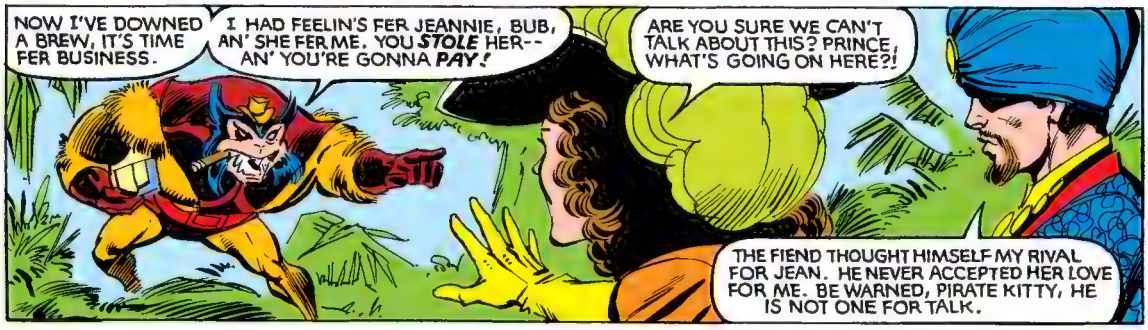
AND SO...
BAMF ITTY BAMF BAMF BAMF
FINK!
I WON'T SAY IT AGAIN, CREEPS--
--SCRAM!
ARE YOU REALLY A GODDESS, WIND-RIDER?
EXCUSE ME, EVERYONE--

... BUT I BELIEVE WE HAVE A VISITOR.
COLOSSUS, ARMOR UP! THE REST OF YOU, SPREAD OUT! THIS COULD BE TROUBLE.


SWEET YOUNG THING--THAT AIN'T THE HALF OF IT.
WHO--WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU?!?
I'M-- MEAN!!

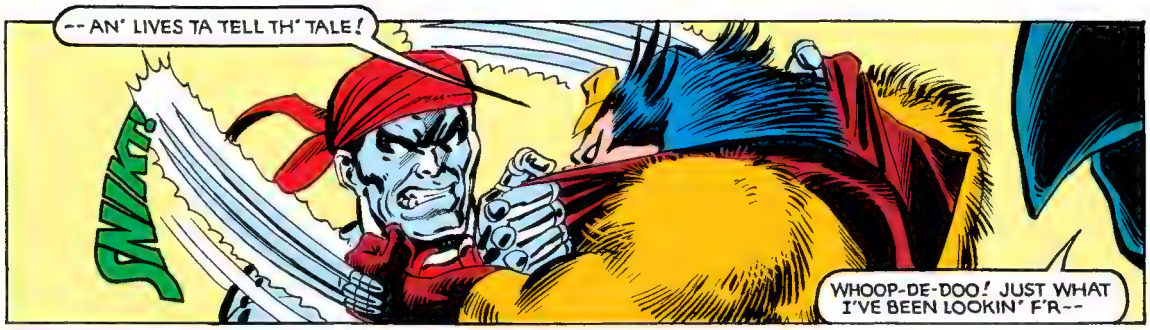

I COME A LONG WAY, A HARD WAY. DIGGIN'S HOT AN' THIRSTY WORK.
POP!
SHLEP!
CHOMP!
PTUI!
URP!

HAH! KITTY MAY HAVE "PEGGED" ME, MEIN FREUND, BUT SHE SKEWERED YOU.
WHAT'S'A MATTER, ELF-- JEALOUS?
PROFESSOR, SCOTTY, JOIN THE PARTY.
WE WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR THE WORLD, CAROL. IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE THESE HALLS HAVE HEARD THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER.


NOW I'VE DOWNED A BREW, IT'S TIME FER BUSINESS.
I HAD FEELIN'S FER JEANNIE, BUB, AN' SHE FER ME. YOU STOLE HER-- AN' YOU'RE GONNA PAY!
ARE YOU SURE WE CAN'T TALK ABOUT THIS? PRINCE, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!
THE FIEND THOUGHT HIMSELF MY RIVAL FOR JEAN. HE NEVER ACCEPTED HER LOVE FOR ME. BE WARNED, PIRATE KITTY, HE IS NOT ONE FOR TALK.

DARN STRAIGHT. OUTTA MY WAY, SHORT-STUFF.
IF YOU KNOW ANY PRAYERS, PRINCE...

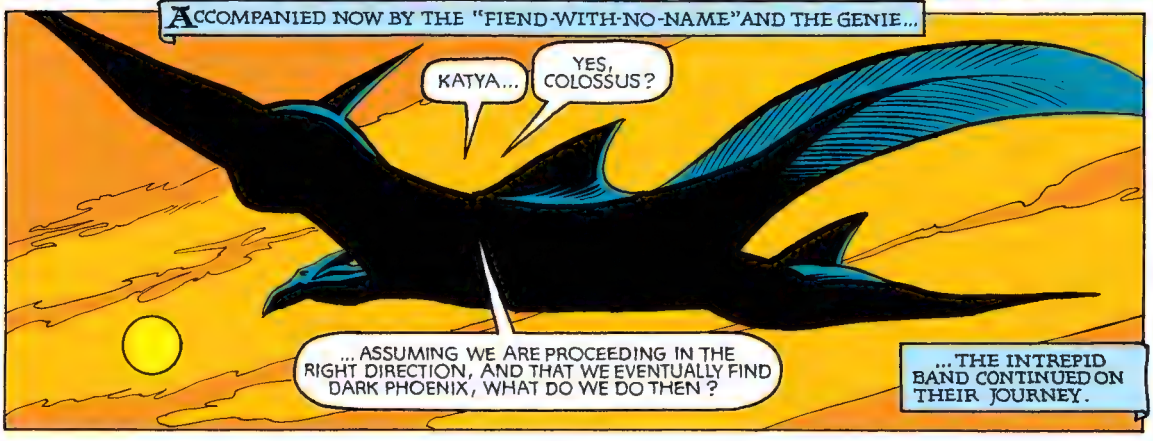
... I SUGGEST, TOVARISCH, THAT YOU SAVE YOUR PRAYERS FOR YOURSELF. YOU WILL NEED THEM.
KATYA IS MY FRIEND. YOU HARM HER AT YOUR PERIL.
OH, YEAH? NO ONE LAYS HANDS ON ME, BUB--

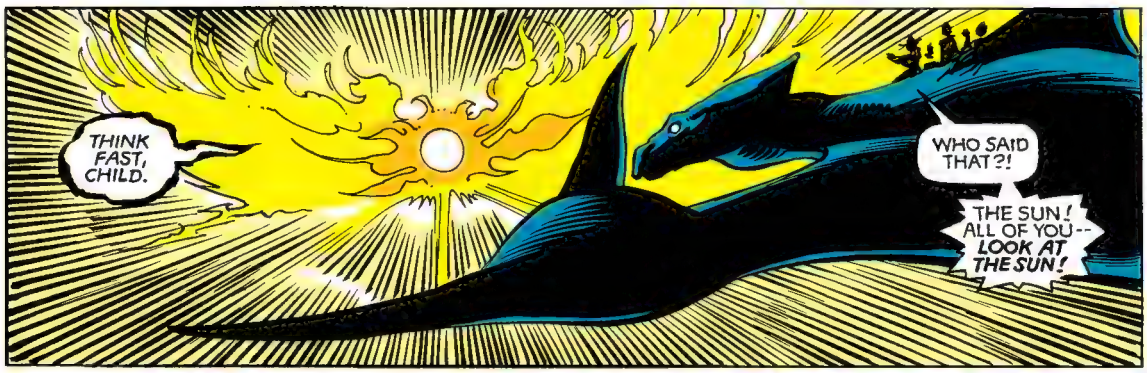

--AN' LIVES TA TELL TH' TALE!
SNIKT!
WHOOP-DE-DOO! JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN LOOKIN' F'R--

--DESSERT!

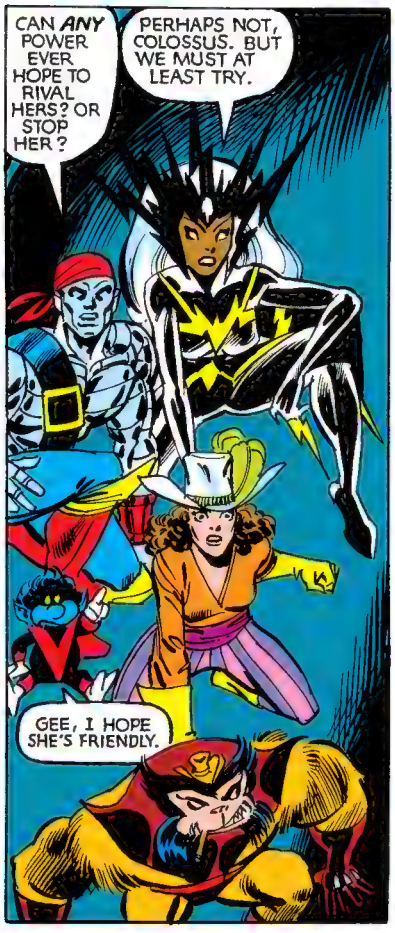
EEEEYOW!
DO YOU MIND?!!

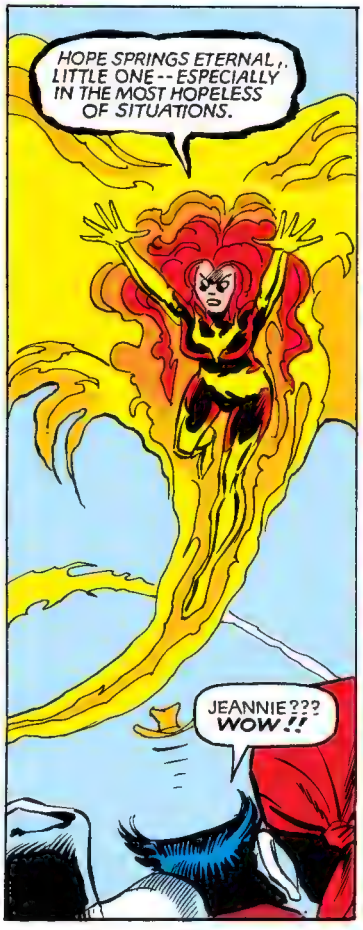
C'MON, DARLIN', INDULGE ME. PLEASE. HE LOOKS SOOOO TASTY.
BEHAVE YOURSELF, LOCKHEED!
AND THAT GOES TRIPLE FOR YOU, FUZZY. OR ELSE.


ACCOMPANIED NOW BY THE "FIEND-WITH-NO-NAME" AND THE GENIE...
KATYA...
YES, COLOSSUS?
...ASSUMING WE ARE PROCEEDING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, AND THAT WE EVENTUALLY FIND DARK PHOENIX, WHAT DO WE DO THEN?
...THE INTREPID BAND CONTINUED ON THEIR JOURNEY.

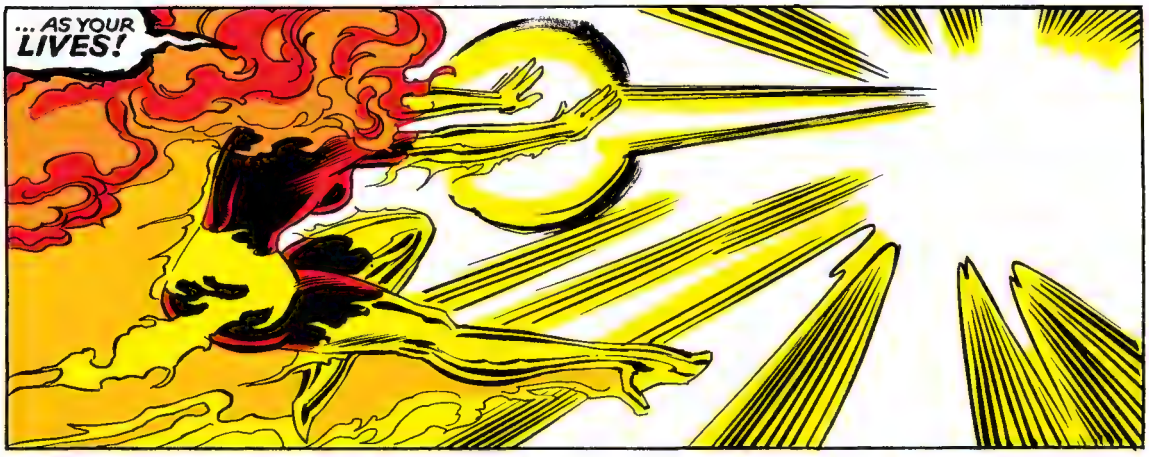

THINK FAST, CHILD.
WHO SAID THAT?!
THE SUN! ALL OF YOU-- LOOK AT THE SUN!

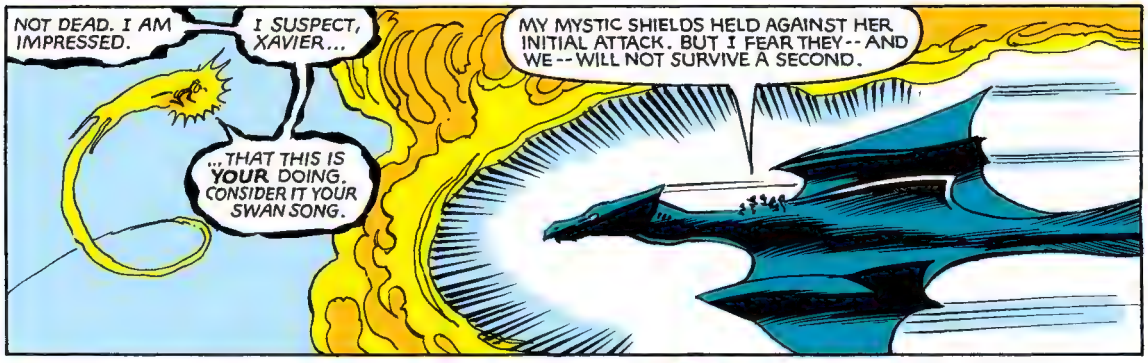
YOUR MOMENT OF TRUTH IS AT HAND.
HELP!

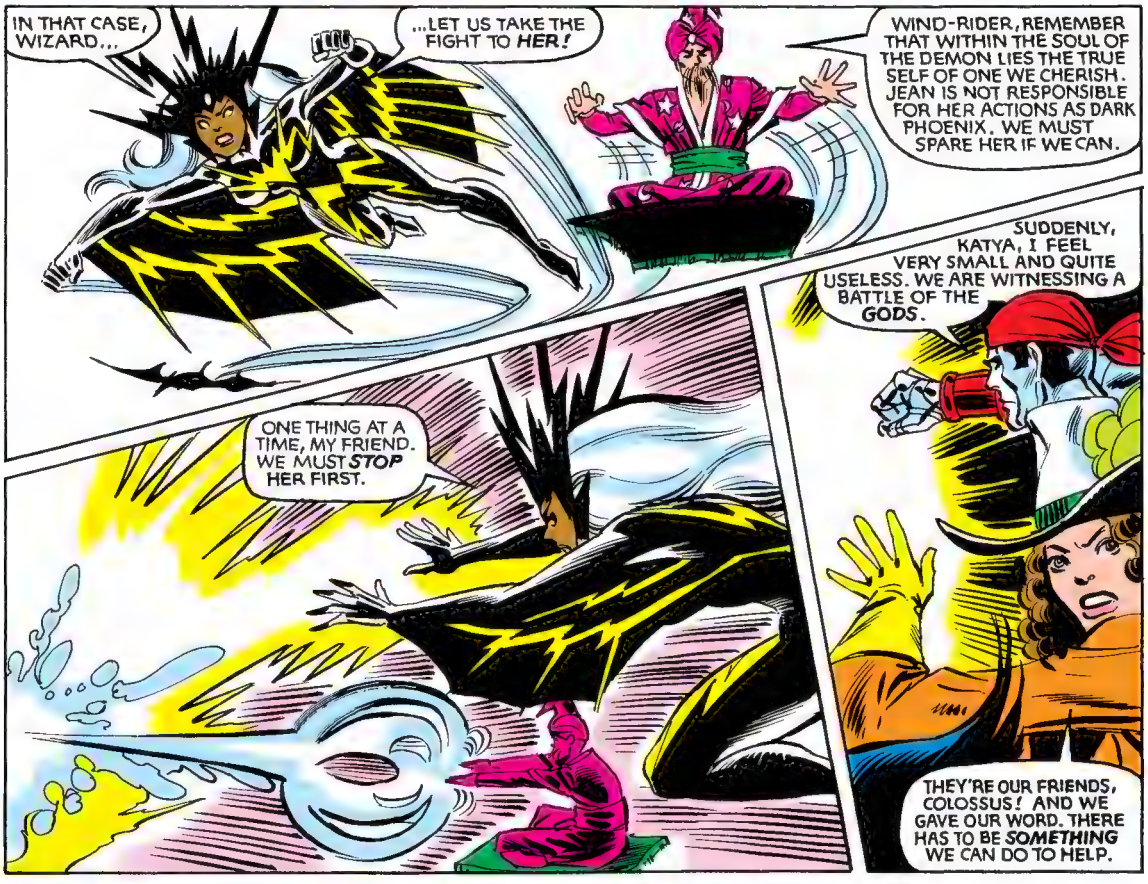

CAN ANY POWER EVER HOPE TO RIVAL HERS? OR STOP HER?
PERHAPS NOT, COLOSSUS. BUT WE MUST AT LEAST TRY.
GEE, I HOPE SHE'S FRIENDLY.


HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL, LITTLE ONE--ESPECIALLY IN THE MOST HOPELESS OF SITUATIONS.
JEANNIE??? WOW!!

HOW BRAVE YOU ALL APPEAR. A PITY I CAN SEE PAST THAT FACADE, TO SENSE THE TERROR IN YOUR HEARTS. BUT DO NOT DESPAIR.
THAT SOUL-SHRIVELING, MIND-NUMBING FEAR WILL BE AS FLEETING...

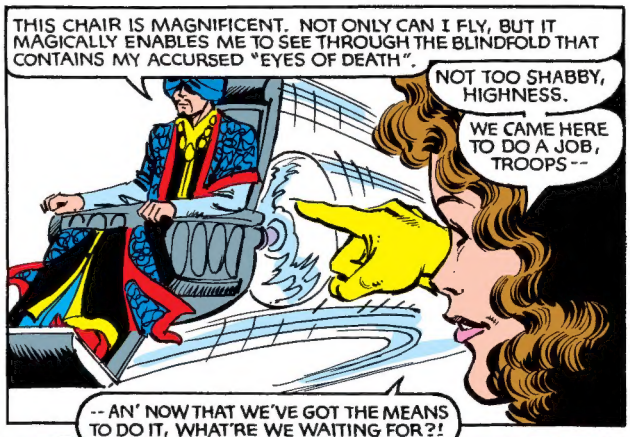

... AS YOUR LIVES!

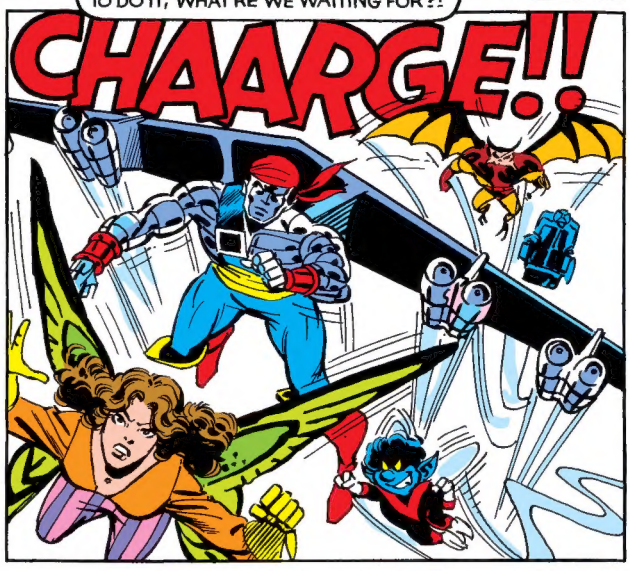

NOT DEAD. I AM IMPRESSED.
I SUSPECT, XAVIER...
...THAT THIS IS YOUR DOING. CONSIDER IT YOUR SWAN SONG.
MY MYSTIC SHIELDS HELD AGAINST HER INITIAL ATTACK. BUT I FEAR THEY -- AND WE -- WILL NOT SURVIVE A SECOND.


IN THAT CASE, WIZARD...
...LET US TAKE THE FIGHT TO HER!
WIND-RIDER, REMEMBER THAT WITHIN THE SOUL OF THE DEMON LIES THE TRUE SELF OF ONE WE CHERISH. JEAN IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HER ACTIONS AS DARK PHOENIX. WE MUST SPARE HER IF WE CAN.
ONE THING AT A TIME, MY FRIEND. WE MUST STOP HER FIRST.
SUDDENLY, KATYA, I FEEL VERY SMALL AND QUITE USELESS. WE ARE WITNESSING A BATTLE OF THE GODS.
THEY'RE OUR FRIENDS, COLOSSUS! AND WE GAVE OUR WORD. THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO TO HELP.

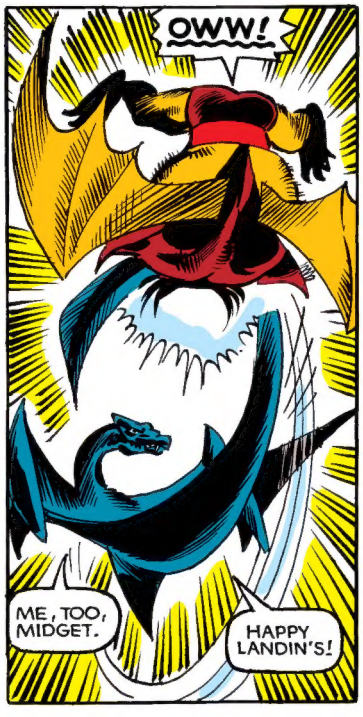
LOCKHEED, MOVE IN CLOSE AN' ZAP PHOENIX WITH A SHOT OF DRAGONFLAME!
YE'RE DAFT, COLLEEN. ALL THAT'LL DO IS MAKE HER MAD AT ME.
KEEP THIS UP, BUSTER, AN' YOU'LL MAKE ME MAD AT YOU.
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT, DARLIN'.
RELAX, KIDDO.
I THINK I CAN GIVE THIS OVER-GROWN LIZARD ALL THE INCENTIVE HE NEEDS TA DO HIS DUTY.
Huh?
OH, NO! FIEND-- DON'T!
OOPS!
YOU DUMMY!
HE HATES THAT!
KITTY AND THE OTHERS--
--THEY'RE FALLING!
BUT I CAN EASILY SAVE THEM.
THE GENIE'S SPELL ENVELOPED KITTY AND HER COMPATRIOTS...
WHAT'S HAPPENING? I--I FEEL... FUNNY!

...WITH SOMEWHAT EXTRA-ORDINARY RESULTS.
WHAT KIND OF WINGS ARE THESE FOR PIRATE KITTY, SCOURGE OF THE SEVEN SEAS. YUCK!
STINK!
WINGS! I--WE--HAVE WINGS! MINE... ARE OF METAL AND YOURS, KATYA...
I LOVE 'EM.
THAT FIGURES.

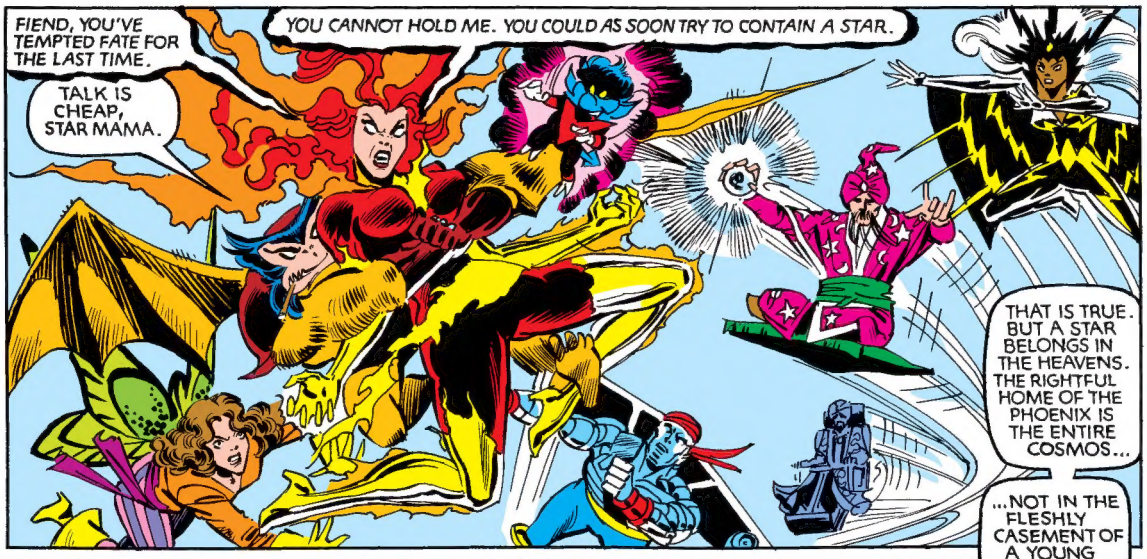

THIS CHAIR IS MAGNIFICENT. NOT ONLY CAN I FLY, BUT IT MAGICALLY ENABLES ME TO SEE THROUGH THE BLINDFOLD THAT CONTAINS MY ACCURSED "EYES OF DEATH".
NOT TOO SHABBY, HIGHNESS.
WE CAME HERE TO DO A JOB, TROOPS--

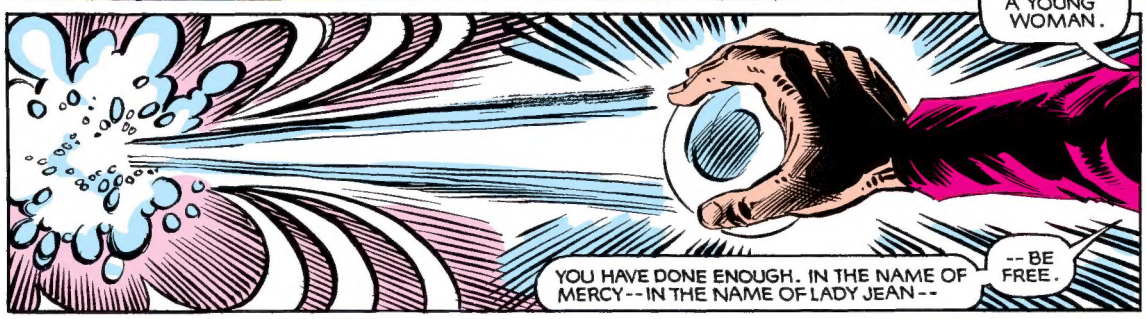

--AN' NOW THAT WE'VE GOT THE MEANS TO DO IT, WHAT'RE WE WAITING FOR?!
CHAARGE!!

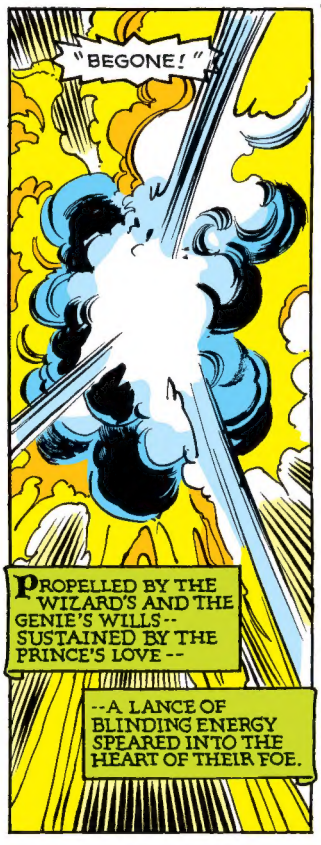
HOLD IT, FUZZBALL! YE AN' ME HAVE A SCORE T' SETTLE.
THE DRAGON!
HEY, FELLA, NO HARD FEELIN'S, RIGHT? I WUZ JUST DOIN' MY BIT FER THE CAUSE, Y'KNOW?

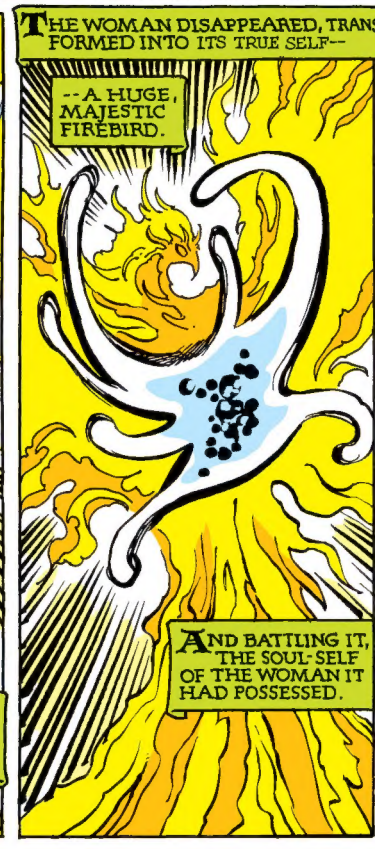

OWW!
ME, TOO, MIDGET.
HAPPY LANDIN'S!

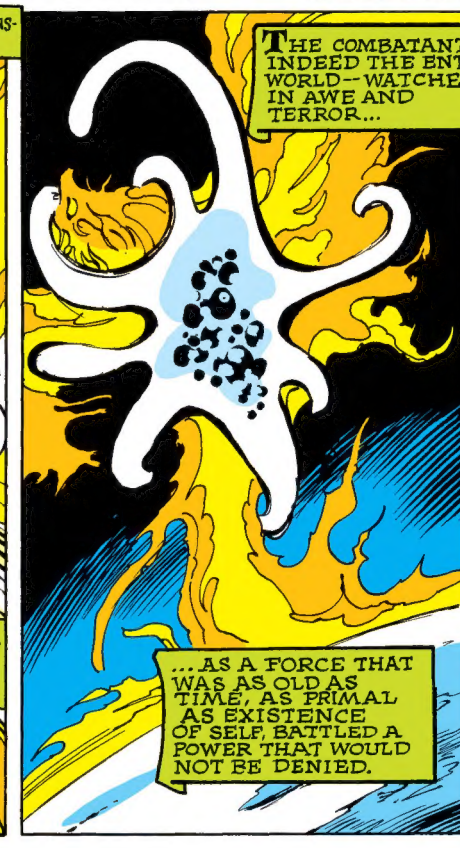
WHO DARES?!
WHO ELSE, BABE?

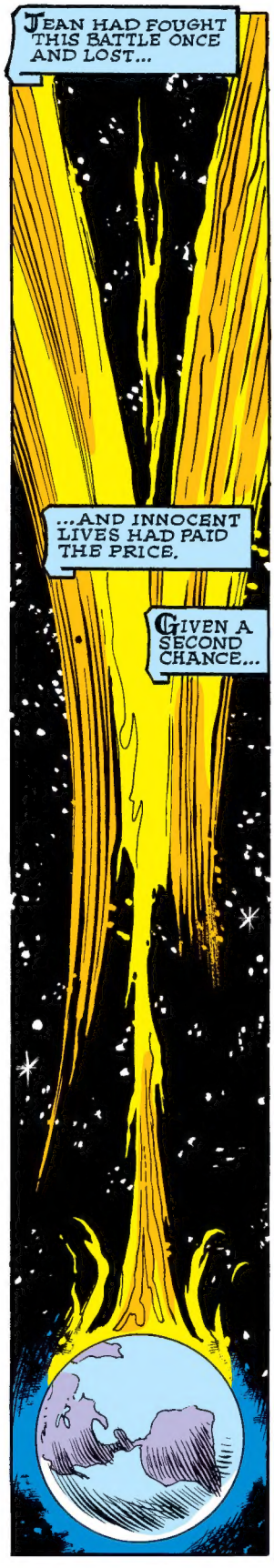

FIEND, YOU'VE TEMPTED FATE FOR THE LAST TIME.
TALK IS CHEAP, STAR MAMA.
YOU CANNOT HOLD ME. YOU COULD AS SOON TRY TO CONTAIN A STAR.
THAT IS TRUE. BUT A STAR BELONGS IN THE HEAVENS. THE RIGHTFUL HOME OF THE PHOENIX IS THE ENTIRE COSMOS...
...NOT IN THE FLESHLY CASEMENT OF A YOUNG WOMAN.

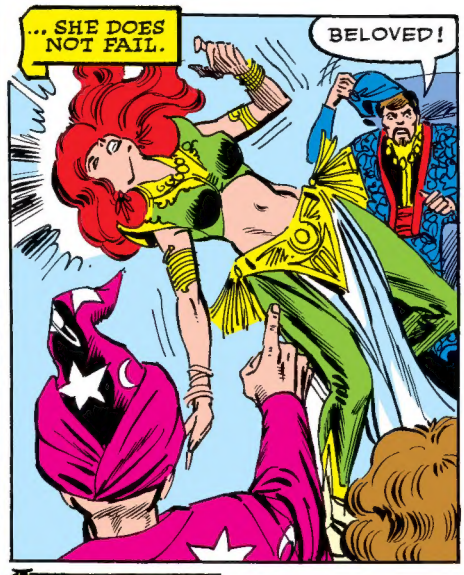

YOU HAVE DONE ENOUGH. IN THE NAME OF MERCY--IN THE NAME OF LADY JEAN--
--BE FREE.

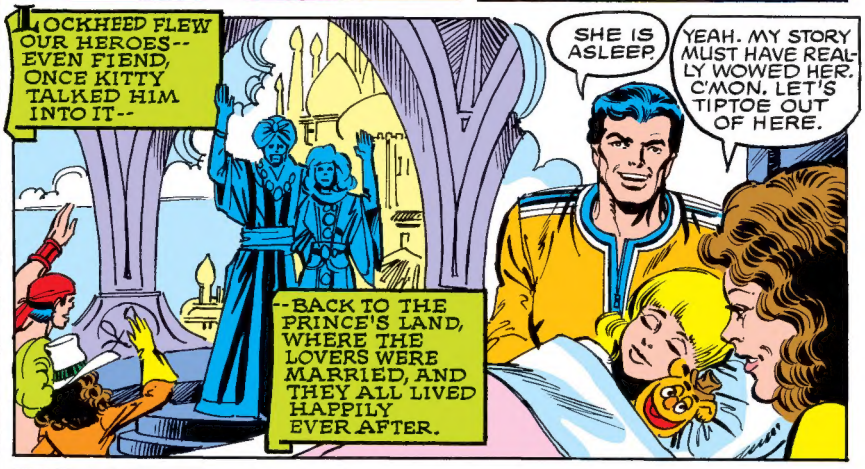

"BEGONE!"
PROPELLED BY THE WIZARD'S AND THE GENIE'S WILLS--SUSTAINED BY THE PRINCE'S LOVE--
--A LANCE OF BLINDING ENERGY SPEARED INTO THE HEART OF THEIR FOE.

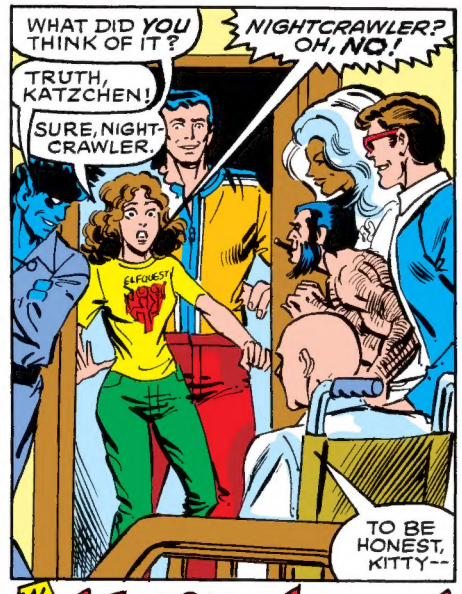

THE WOMAN DISAPPEARED, TRANSFORMED INTO ITS TRUE SELF--
--A HUGE, MAJESTIC FIREBIRD.
AND BATTLING IT, THE SOUL-SELF OF THE WOMAN IT HAD POSSESSED.

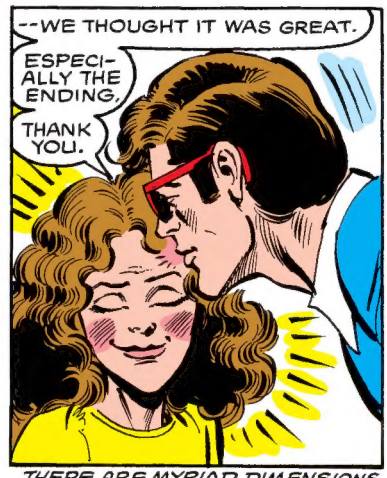

THE COMBATANTS--INDEED THE ENTIRE WORLD--WATCHED IN AWE AND TERROR...
...AS A FORCE THAT WAS AS OLD AS TIME, AS PRIMAL AS EXISTENCE OF SELF, BATTLED A POWER THAT WOULD NOT BE DENIED.











THERE ARE MYRIAD DIMENSIONS, AN INFINITE NUMBER OF ALTERNATE REALITIES. SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW, SCOTT KNOWS, THE LOVERS DID, INDEED, LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER. AND FOR THAT, HE IS CONTENT.

NEXT: REUNION WITH THE STARJAMMERS!

MINUTEMEN

Sy13nt
Bob